

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS MONTREAL 1664

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJ: UPSET TORY WIN IN HOCHELAGA BYELECTION

REF: MONTREAL 1656, OCTOBER 14, 1975 AND PREVIOUS

1. JACQUES LAVOIE, 38 YEAR OLD PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE, DEALT FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER PIERRE JUNEAU A DECISIVE DEFEAT IN THE HOCHELAGA BYELECTION OCTOBER 14. LAVOIE, WHO LOST TO GERARD PELLETIER IN 1974 BY JUST OVER 4,000 VOTES, HAD A SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 2500 VOTE MARGIN OVER JUNEAU IN LIGHT BALLOTING. ACCORDING TO LAVOIE, MARGIN GREATER THAN HE EXPECTED.

2. WINNER CAMPAIGNED PRINCIPALLY ON BEING A LOCAL BOY ("UN GARS DE HOCHELAGA") AND ATTRIBUTES HIS VICTORY TO THAT FACT. MEDIA, HOWEVER, ADD NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND LOW TURNOUT (ABOUT 45 PERCENT) TO CAUSES OF JUNEAU'S DEFEAT, ALTHOUGH ALSO GIVING MUCH WEIGHT TO GENERAL ANNOYANCE OF DISTRICT RESIDENTS AT BEING SO TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY LIBERALS AS TO HAVE A CANDIDATE "PARACHUTED IN" ON ASSUMPTION ANY LIBERAL WOULD WIN.

3. JUNEAU BACKING OFF SOMEWHAT FROM STATEMENT HE WOULD RESIGN AND NOT RUN AGAIN ELSEWHERE, CLAIMING NOT TO HAVE BEEN MISQUOTED EXACTLY BUT MISINTERPRETED. "WHAT I SAID WAS THAT I COULD NOT
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REMAIN A MINISTER FOR LONG WITHOUT A SEAT." SAYS HE MUST CONSULT

HIS FAMILY AND PM TRUDEAU BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISION ON FUTURE MOVES. MEDIA ALREADY SPECULATING ON WHO WILL REPLACE HIM, CENTERING ATTENTION ON MONIQUE BEGIN (SAINT MICHEL) AND FRANCIS FOX (ARGENTEUIL-DEUX MONTAGNES).

4. GILLES CAQUETTE'S SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY CANDIDACY LESS OF A FACTOR THAN ANTICIPATED, ALTHOUGH HE GARNERED ALMOST THE EXACT PERCENTAGE (10.5) OF TOTAL VOTES AS THE PARTY GAINED IN THE 1974 GENERAL ELECTION.

5. LAVOIE LOST NO TIME IN ANNOUNCING HIS STRONG SUPPORT FOR QUEBEC MP CLAUDE WAGNER (SAINT HYACINTHE) TO BE NEW LEADER OF FEDERAL TORY PARTY. WAGNER, WHO MADE SEVERAL CAMPAIGN VISITS TO HOCHELAGA ON LAVOIE'S BEHALF, HAS NOT DECLARED HIS CANDIDACY BUT IS CONSIDERED A STRONG CONTENDER FOR THAT POST.
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